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MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1930

WHOLE No. 632

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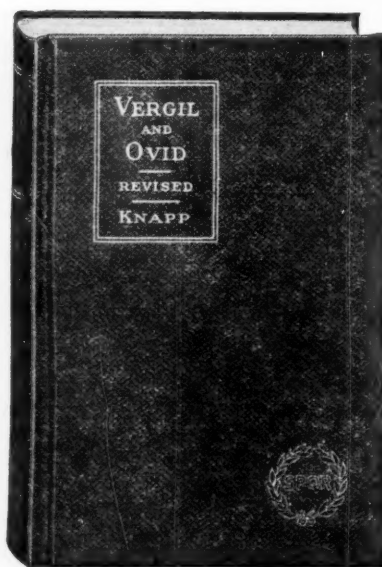
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VOLUME XXIII, No. 21

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## MARCUS CAELIUS RUFUS

Marcus Caelius Rufus was born in Puteoli. His father was a Roman knight, a banker, who had built up his fortune in African trade; his family, however, had never distinguished itself. Caelius was born in 82 B. C. Pliny the Elder tells us<sup>1</sup> that Caelius and C. Licinius Calvus had the same birthday. 'Both of them lived to be orators, it is true', Pliny says, 'but how different their destiny'. Calvus will be remembered as one of the outstanding orators of the Ciceronian epoch. His short stature was an object of Catullus's jest (53.5), but his earnestness and his capacity for hard work won favorable comment. He died of overwork, in fact, before he reached middle age. Caelius, too, died as a young man, in his thirty-fourth year. His death, however, was not the result of overzealous devotion to his profession, but was the logical end of one who had been a playboy of politics. As a brilliant man of whims he is interesting, and he is worthy of attention because of his contacts, for he knew Catiline rather well, Cicero very well, and Lesbia too well.

Caelius's father wished him to distinguish himself as a politician. It is no wonder, therefore, that we find him apprenticed, so to speak, to Cicero. The latter says in one place<sup>2</sup> that young Marcus was always seen during this period with his father, with Marcus Crassus, or with Cicero himself. Either the great orator or paid teachers gave him his lessons in rhetoric, that elaborate training of a more or less practical nature which appears to have been considered necessary before a man could be launched on a public career. At any rate, Caelius's relation to Cicero was at least what was called *tirocinium fori*.

Let me quote a couple of sentences from Quintilian<sup>3</sup>: 'What can be more honorable than to teach that which you know surpassing well? It was for this that Caelius the Elder brought his son to Cicero, as the latter tells us'. We must realize that ancient rhetoric had persuasion, not truth, for its goal. To learn how to win a case or an argument was important. The *integrity* of the method by which victory was won was relatively unimportant. At one time Cicero himself implied that he attributed his success in a case, in part at least, to throwing dust into the eyes of the jury<sup>3a</sup>. Whatever the positive result of such rhetorical training might be, we can be sure that, when it was given to a young man in his 'teens, selfish, unprincipled, as Caelius was, it did not make him any less selfish or less unprincipled.

I have hinted that Caelius was selfish and unprincipled, but in these respects he was like most of his younger contemporaries. Boissier says<sup>3b</sup>:

... All the young men of that time, the Curios, the Dolabellas, resemble him. They are all, like him,

corrupted early, little concerned about their dignity, prodigal of their wealth, friends of facile pleasures; they all throw themselves into public life as soon as they can with a restless ambition and great needs to satisfy, and with few scruples and no beliefs.

One of Caelius's friends was the poet Catullus. We can almost picture Caelius as the clever, gay man-about-town that we know Catullus himself to have been. One man among those whom Caelius met appealed to his imagination. This man, Catiline, was a born leader and, in addition, held out promises of rich rewards to his followers. Perhaps Catiline commanded the only hero-worship that Caelius ever gave.

In 63 B. C., the year of Cicero's consulship, Caelius was nineteen years of age. During this year Caelius made a sudden transition to Catiline's party. What did Cicero think of this? With the vituperation of the four Catilinarian Orations in our ears, it is interesting to listen to the following words of Cicero himself<sup>4</sup>:

'Caelius became a follower of Catiline when he had already been mixing in the forum for several years; many of every rank and every age did the same thing. For Catiline, as you probably recall, had many of the finest virtues, shown not fully but in outline. He was on familiar terms with many wicked men, but he pretended to be devoted to the best people. There were in him many enticements to men's passions; there were also some things about him that were incentives to industry and toil. He was a slave to lust and yet energetic as a military man. I do not believe that another prodigy of the sort ever existed on earth, made up of natural interests and passions so contradictory, different, and inconsistent. Who was a more acceptable associate at one time of well-known people? Who was more intimate with low characters? At times what citizen took a more honorable part? At other times who was a more offensive enemy to this State? ... Strangely enough, he could live strictly when in the company of the strict, pleasantly with those who had no worries, seriously when old men were around him, affably with the young, audaciously when among criminals, and luxuriously with the profligate'.

Elsewhere<sup>5</sup> Cicero tells us,

'Even I myself—even I, I say—was almost deceived by him in the old days, since he seemed to me to be a worthwhile citizen and desirous of the regard of the best people as well as a trustworthy and dependable friend'.

This brings to mind a letter<sup>6</sup> written in 65 in which Cicero says, 'At this time I am thinking of defending my rival, Catiline'. He was referring to the accusation of maladministration in Africa launched against Catiline. Of course, every mitigating word for Catiline in the Pro Caelio is a good word for Caelius, as Cicero wished it to be.

As a young man Caelius loved wine, women, and song. These follies and the expenses they involved brought reprimands from his father, and the ensuing

<sup>1</sup>l. 165. <sup>2</sup>Pro Caelio 9. <sup>3</sup>l. 11. 6. <sup>3a</sup>See Quintilian 2. 17. 21. <sup>3b</sup>Gaston Boissier, Cicero and his Friends (as translated by A. D. Jones), 159 (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900).

<sup>4</sup>Pro Caelio 12-13.

<sup>5</sup>Ibidem, 14.

<sup>6</sup>Ad Atticum 1. 2.

family quarrel resulted in young Caelius leaving home and renting an apartment on the Palatine in the house of the famous Appius Clodius<sup>7</sup>. It was here that Caelius met Clodia, if he had not already made her acquaintance. Clodia is associated in our minds with Catullus, who addressed her as Lesbia. There is no doubt that she and her group of young admirers led a gay life and a merry one. Clodia, the Medea of the Palatine, as Cicero calls her<sup>8</sup>, is treated with no kindness by Cicero, although he declares in one place<sup>9</sup>, in referring to her, that he has no ill-feeling against women, 'especially a woman who is a friend of all men'. Boissier says<sup>10</sup>:

If we relied on the evidence of Cicero we should have a very bad opinion of Clodia; but Cicero is a too partial witness to be altogether just, and the furious hatred he bore the brother renders him very much suspected when he speaks of the sister.

We have every reason to believe that Caelius found it easy to accept Clodia's favors and money. Clodia, on the other hand, found it easy to give them and to give them not only to Caelius, but to Calvus, Catullus, and others. Catullus and Caelius may have been rivals, perhaps friendly rivals, or may not have been rivals at all. One meets the names Caelius and Rufus several times in Catullus's work, but we cannot always be certain that a reference to the young orator is intended. Poem 58, for example, reads<sup>10a</sup>:

O Caelius, my Lesbia, that Lesbia, Lesbia whom alone Catullus loved more than himself and all his own, now in the cross-roads and alleys serves the filthy lusts of the descendants of the lordly-minded Remus.

In Poem 100, addressing Caelius, Catullus says:

... Your friendship to me was excellently shown—it was unique! when a mad flame scorched my vitals. Luck to you, Caelius! success to your loves!

Some critics think that Poem 100 implies that Caelius showed his friendship by withdrawing his attentions to Lesbia in favor of his older rival. This may have been feigned in order to take Catullus off his guard. The poem that gives the best evidence of rivalry is Poem 77:

Rufus, whom I, your friend, trusted in vain, and to no purpose—in vain? nay, rather at a great and ruinous price—have you stolen into my heart and burning into my vitals torn away, alas, all my blessings? Torn away, alas, alas! you the cruel poison of my life, alas, alas! you the deadly bane of my friendship!

Poem 69 also is addressed to a Rufus.

We all know how Catullus felt when Lesbia threw him over. But Caelius himself broke off his attachment to this brilliant woman. Perhaps he was rejoicing that he had saved himself from shipwreck, as Horace fancies himself doing in the affair with Pyrrha<sup>11</sup>. If he was, his rejoicing was somewhat premature. Congreve tells us that<sup>12</sup>

Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned,  
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorned.

<sup>7</sup>Cicero says (Pro Caelio 18) that it was in order to be near the Forum that Caelius moved to the Palatine.

<sup>8</sup>Pro Caelio 18.

<sup>9</sup>Ibidem, 32.

<sup>10</sup>See page 162 of the work cited in note 3 b.

<sup>10a</sup>I use the translation of Catullus by F. W. Cornish, in The Loeb Classical Library.

<sup>11</sup>Carmina 1.5.13-16.

<sup>12</sup>The Mourning Bride, Act 3, Scene 1.

The Medea of Seneca was "a woman scorned"; so was the Medea of the Palatine. With the help of those of her friends who hated Caelius, Clodia accused him of several crimes, including an attempt to poison her. At the trial, he was defended by Cicero and the wealthy Crassus.

Perhaps we ought to retrace our steps and take a glance at Caelius's public career. In 61 he went to Africa with the proconsul, Quintus Pompeius Rufus, in order to learn something about provincial administration and to attend to some business for his father. The assertion of Cicero that Caelius had never really been an active Catilinarian receives support from the fact that in 59 Caelius accused Gaius Antonius, Cicero's fellow-consul four years before, of having been one of the conspirators. It would appear that Cicero was practically forced to come to Antonius's defense because he had bribed Antonius to betray Catiline. Cicero says that Caelius launched this accusation against Antonius in order to gain a reputation. 'I wish', he says<sup>13</sup>, 'that his desire for glory had taken him in a different direction'. One reason for this statement is the result of the trial; Cicero had lost his case.

Not long after this Caelius was elected quaestor. We have no way of knowing whether or not he purchased votes for this office, as his enemies claimed (Cicero, Pro Caelio 16). In 57 Caelius prosecuted Lucius Sempronius Atratinus on a charge of bribery. Again Cicero was the lawyer for the defense. This time the veteran won. Not satisfied with the verdict, Caelius in 56 accused Atratinus of the same crime. But, before the second suit came up for trial, the accuser suddenly became an accused. Sempronius Atratinus the Younger charged Caelius with *vis*, in order to avenge his father and to please Clodia. Caelius spoke in his own behalf. Neither his speech nor the speech of Crassus is extant, but Cicero's Pro Caelio has come down to us. Heitland<sup>14a</sup> calls it "a shameless masterpiece in palliation of youthful indiscretions".

The Oratio Pro Caelio is really a sweeping defense of Caelius's life up to the time the speech was made. Caelius is accused? Yes (§ 1), 'accused by the son of the man whom he himself prosecutes and has prosecuted, and he is accused on account of the influence of a prostitute'. Cicero reminds the court of 'the tears of Caelius's mother and her incredible sorrow, the mourning appearance of the father and his distress, which you now behold'. Was he not a friend of Catiline? Yes, but never his accomplice. Did he not live apart from his father? Yes, but only to be nearer the forum, the center of activities. Has he not led a rather wild life? Yes, to be sure, but, says Cicero (43),

'... I could name many outstanding and distinguished men, some of whom were too licentious in their youth and were involved in profuse luxury, big debts, extravagance, and debaucheries, but who covered up their youthful folly by their many virtues in later life'.

In another place (28) Cicero says,

'... To be sure, many men in this city, not merely men who had tasted this kind of life with the edges of their

<sup>13</sup>Pro Caelio 74.

<sup>14a</sup>W. E. Heitland, The Roman Republic, 3.187 (Cambridge, at the University Press, 1909).

lips, and touched it with the tips of their fingers, as it is said, but who had given up their entire youth to sensual pleasures, . . . emerged at last and devoted themselves to the straight and narrow path and became dignified and distinguished men. For everybody agrees that some indulgence is allowed to this age, and nature herself produces passions in youth. If these break out in such a way that they do not shake up another person's life or overturn his house, they are usually considered pardonable and endurable'.

In order to whitewash Caelius and to make the charges against him appear ridiculous Cicero must blacken Clodia. He describes her (38) as a woman 'who made herself common to everybody, who always had somebody openly known as her lover, to whose gardens, home, and seashore place one could bring his passions as though by his own right, who even kept young men and with her own money made up for their fathers' stinginess. . . . Am I to think any one an adulterer who greets her a little freely?'

After he has besmirched Clodia, Cicero has no difficulty in refuting the charges originated by her. The details of this I shall spare you. I ought not to leave the speech, however, without referring to the elaborate appeal to the emotions, at the end, in which Cicero makes much use of the father of Caelius.

Boissier says<sup>13b</sup>,

. . . We may affirm, without temerity, that, although from this moment his private life is unknown to us, he never entirely renounced the dissipations of his youth, and that, magistrate and politician though he was, he continued to the end to mix pleasure with business.

I must say that, after an examination of all the passages in ancient literature bearing on Caelius, I find no foundation for so definite a statement. My guess is, however, that Boissier has hit upon the truth.

Caelius became tribune of the plebs in 52, and several times showed his opposition to Pompey. He lent his support to Milo, the murderer of Publius Clodius, and as a result Cicero has a good word to say for Caelius in the *Pro Milone* (91):

' . . . You saw the Roman people killed, you saw the assembly riotously disturbed by swords, while Marcus Caelius, the tribune of the people, was listened to in silence. He is a man of the greatest courage in political life, of the greatest stability in undertaking a case, devoted to the interest of the best class of citizens and to the authority of the Senate, and in this—shall I call it the unpopularity or the misfortune of Milo?—Caelius has been of extraordinary, god-like, and incredible good faith'.

After Caelius left the tribunate, he brought about the condemnation of his colleague, Quintus Pompeius Rufus, on a charge of *vis*. Valerius Maximus says (4.2.7) that, although Caelius's life was base, he had compassion for those who needed his help; he cites in illustration the case of Pompeius, whose paternal property was returned to him, after his conviction, through Caelius's influence.

In 51, when Cicero went as proconsul to Cilicia, he made Caelius his home correspondent. Fifteen of the seventeen letters in Cicero, *Epistulae Ad Familiares*, Book 8, are the result. The letters, says Fowler

(*Social Life at Rome in the Age of Cicero*, 130 [New York, The Macmillan Company, 1909]), show him to be bright, happy, witty, frivolous, and doubtless lovable . . . Cicero himself now and again catches the infection, and tries (in vain) to write in the same frivolous manner. . . ."<sup>14</sup>

Again, Fowler writes (*ibidem*, 131):

Caelius' letters give us a chance of seeing what that life of the Forum really was which so fascinated the young men of the day, and some of the old, such as Cicero himself. We can see these children playing on the very edge of the crater, like the French noblesse before the Revolution. In both cases there was a semi-consciousness that the eruption was not far off,—but they went on playing. What was it that so greatly amused and pleased them?

Let us take a glance at *Ad Familiares*, Book 8, to learn something about Caelius himself. In the first letter he tells Cicero that he is keeping his promise to write and let him know what is going on in the city. 'I know', he says, 'how curious you are and how pleasant it is for everybody who is travelling to find out even the most trifling things that are going on at home'. The second letter contains news about the courts and about politics and a request for panthers for games which Caelius was to exhibit as curule aedile. Since Cicero is in an Asiatic province, it ought to be easy for him, says Caelius, to get together a lot of panthers as well as money. The third asks if Cicero is not surprised at receiving letters regularly. Again there is a discussion of politics. Finally comes a strange request:

' . . . Now I beg of you, when you shall be at leisure to do so (as I hope you will), to inscribe a literary production to me, in order that I may understand that you have a place in your heart for me. I can hear you asking, "How did that idea come into your head?" I am hoping that out of so many of your works there may stand out some memorial to our friendship for posterity to look upon. I imagine that you want to know what sort of writing I am referring to. You will be able more quickly to think of the type that is best suited to the purpose, since you have all knowledge at your command; still, let it be of a kind that is pertinent to our friendship and that can have a good circulation'.

Politics again form the subject of the fourth letter; at the end, however, Caelius reiterates his request for the panthers. In the fifth we have politics again. The sixth ends with a sentence that comes as a surprise: 'It will be a reflection on you if I do not have some Greek panthers'. The seventh is gossip:

' . . . Cornificius has become engaged to the daughter of Orestilla; Paula Valeria, the sister of Triarius, on the day of her husband's return from his province, divorced him without a statement of cause, but she is to be married to Decimus Brutus. Many incredible things of this sort have happened in your absence. No one would have suspected Servius Ocella of being a Don Juan with the ladies, had he not been caught twice in three days in indelicate situations. You ask, "Where?" Where I should least wish, take my word for it. I leave it to you to find out from others'.

Politics and panthers make up the eighth letter. The ninth has more about the panthers than any other letter has:

<sup>13b</sup>On page 176 of the work cited in note 3 b.

<sup>14</sup>Perhaps *Ad Familiares* 8.14.3 shows this effort.



'...In almost all my letters I have written to you about panthers. It will be a disgrace to yourself that Patisus has sent ten panthers to Curio if you do not send me many more. Curio gave these to me and ten others from Africa... If you will only have remembered to do it and will have put the Ciburatae to the task and likewise will send letters to Pamphylia (for there, they say, they get a lot of them), you will be able to do what you want... In this connection you have nothing to do but open your mouth; it is merely a business of commanding and obeying. As soon as they are captured, my men will bring them to Rome'.

But I cannot dismiss this subject of the panthers, for which Caelius makes demands so pressing and blunt, without quoting from Plutarch's biography of Cicero (36: I use Langhorne's translation):

...Caelius, the orator, having desired him to send him some panthers from Cilicia for his games at Rome he could not, in his answer, forbear boasting of his achievements<sup>14a</sup>. He said, "There were no panthers left in Cilicia. Those animals, in their vexation to find that they were the only object of war, while everything else was at peace, were fled into Caria".

The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth letters are political in nature. Caelius writes the thirteenth to Cicero after he hears of the marriage of the latter's daughter to Dolabella:

'...On my honor I congratulate you on your alliance with a most excellent gentleman; for that is what I think he is. To be sure he was guilty of many indiscretions as a young man which have not helped him at all, but, if any of these should remain, I trust that they will be quickly removed by your own association with him and influence over him as well as by the natural restraint of Tullia'.

One almost forgets, as he reads this, who was its author. One almost forgets, too, what sort of son-in-law Dolabella was. Cicero would have been better off without him. One cannot without a little thought pass the last sentence of this thirteenth letter: 'As I am writing this letter, Hortensius is at death's door'. What did Caelius think of Hortensius?

But the fourteenth letter is the real key to Caelius's character. When civil war threatened to break out, Caelius stayed on the fence awhile. Was it to be Caesar's camp or Pompey's? He says:

'...I think that the fact does not escape your attention that in civil controversy which has not reached the stage when arms are taken up men ought to follow the more honorable cause, but, when the argument has come to be a matter of warfare and camp, it is better to choose to follow the stronger side, for that is the safer course'.

Caelius went into war, as he went into most things, for personal advantage. With enthusiasm he jumped into an undertaking, but his hands were out to grasp what he expected to receive; so it was in this instance, when he decided to cast his lot with Caesar. In the sixteenth letter he even attempts to dissuade Cicero from sympathizing with Pompey in the Civil War. Dio Cassius<sup>15</sup> tells us that when Caesar

promised to disband his legions and give up his office if Pompey would also do the same.... No one voted

<sup>14a</sup>Why must critics, ancient and modern alike, be always so serious? Plutarch might well have recalled Cicero's unflinching love of jesting. See a paper by the late Professor F. W. Kelsey, Cicero as a Wit, *The Classical Journal* 3(1907), 3-10. C. K.<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>15</sup>2 (I use Cary's translation, in *The Loeb Classical Library*).

that Pompey should give up his arms, since he had his troops in the suburbs; but all, except one Marcus Caelius and Curio, who had brought his <= Caesar's > letter, voted that Caesar must do so....

In this we seem to see a determination in the face of great odds that was not always evident in Caelius, although even here we can detect an ulterior motive.

Caelius's services under Caesar included participation in the campaign in Spain. It seems unlikely, however, that the Marcus Rufus referred to by Caesar, *De Bello Civili* 2.43, as serving under Curio in Africa is our Caelius.

The seventeenth and last letter of *Ad Familiares*, Book 8, shows Caelius ready to play the turncoat. He is changing his allegiance, for he had not received from Caesar the recognition that he believed to be due him. He frankly admits that he is a sorehead and that it is for this reason that he is shifting. Dio Cassius (42. 22-25; again I use Cary's translation) can tell the story better than I:

...Marcus Caelius actually lost his life because he dared to set aside the laws established by Caesar regarding loans, assuming that their author had been defeated and had perished, and because as a result he stirred up Rome and Campania... he became angry because he had not been made praetor urbanus, and because his colleague Trebonius had been preferred before him for this office, not by lot, as had been the custom, but by Caesar's choice. Hence he opposed his colleague in everything.... He not only would not consent to his pronouncing judgments according to Caesar's laws, but he also gave notice to such as owed anything that he would assist them against their creditors, and to all who dwelt in other people's houses that he would release them from payment of the rent. Having by this course gained a considerable following, he set upon Trebonius with their aid and would have slain him, had the other not managed to change his dress and escape in the crowd....

As a protection to the city Servilius brought in some soldiers who chanced to be on their way to Gaul.

...After this he <= Servilius > would not permit Caelius to do anything in his capacity as praetor, but assigned the duties pertaining to his office to another praetor, debarred him from the senate, dragged him from the rostra while he was delivering some tirade or other, and broke his chair in pieces. Caelius was very angry with him for each of these acts, but since Servilius had a body of troops in town that matched his own, he was afraid that he might be punished, and so decided to set out for Campania to join Milo, who was beginning a rebellion....

Velleius Paterculus has something to say of Caelius. Velleius, it will be remembered, was a bit of a soldier himself; he was better as a soldier than as a historian, undoubtedly. Of this last episode Velleius says<sup>16</sup>:

...The character of the agent does not allow a screen to be cast over his act. While Caesar was deciding by arms the fate of the empire at Pharsalia, Marcus Caelius, a man nearly resembling Curio in eloquence and ability, but his superior in both, and not less ingeniously vicious, proposed in his praetorship, as he could not be saved by quiet and moderate means, (for his property was in a more desperate state than even his mind,) a law for the relief of debtors; nor could he be deterred from his purpose by the influence of the senate or the consul, but called to his aid Annius Milo, (who

<sup>16</sup>2.68 (I use Watson's translation, in *The Bohn Library*).



was incensed against the Julian party, because he had not obtained a repeal of his banishment,) and endeavoured to raise a sedition in the city, and secretly to stir up war in the country; however, by the authority of the senate, he was first banished, and soon after cut off by the arms of the consuls near Thurii.

But perhaps we ought to let Caesar bring the account to a finish. He says, in his *De Bello Civili* 3.20-22, that, after Caelius had reached Thurii,

'on trying to tamper with certain inhabitants of the municipality and promising money to Caesar's Gallic and Spanish horsemen who had been sent there on garrison duty, he was killed by them. Thus the first outbreak of a serious movement, which kept Italy harassed by the burden of work imposed on the magistrates by the crisis, came promptly and easily to an end'.

Thus passes the man who saw red and acted red when he thought it to his advantage, who knew the best people and the worst people of his time, who had the fervor without the sincerity of George Eliot's Felix Holt, who might have been a Judas had he lived in another time and place. But, after all, as Boissier<sup>16a</sup> reminds us, Caelius, in his defection from Caesar, was only one of a number: "Among those who killed Caesar were found perhaps his best generals, Sulpicius Galba, ... Basilius, ... Decimus Brutus and Trebonius". Caesar had bought his followers. Treasures brought by him from Gaul to Rome every year paid those who gave him loyalty. Says Boissier<sup>16b</sup>,

... In general the fidelity of people who are bought does not last much longer than the money they receive; now, in their hands, money does not last long, and the day one tires of providing for their prodigality, one is obliged to begin to distrust them.

Caelius, like the other men Boissier described, was an opportunist. Caesar had arranged to reduce debts by more than one-fourth. The creditors were glad to get anything, to be sure, but the debtors, who had hoped for a general cancellation of debts, were dissatisfied. Caelius thought he saw his chance in this situation.

What has Cicero to say of Caelius after his untimely end? In his *Brutus*<sup>17</sup>, discussing renowned orators, he says:

... Marcus Caelius too must not pass unnoticed, notwithstanding the unhappy change, either of his fortune or disposition, which marked the latter part of his life. As long as he was directed by my influence, he behaved himself so well as a tribune of the people, that no man supported the interests of the senate, and of all the good and virtuous, in opposition to the factious and unruly madness of a set of abandoned citizens, with more firmness than he did; a part in which he was enabled to exert himself to great advantage, by the force and dignity of his language, and his lively humour and polite address. He spoke several harangues in a very sensible style, and three spirited invectives, which originated from our political disputes; and his defensive speeches, though not equal to the former, were yet tolerably good, and had a degree of merit which was far from being contemptible. After he had been advanced to the aedileship, by the hearty approbation of all the better sort of citizens, as he had lost my company (for I was then abroad in Cilicia) he likewise lost himself; and entirely sunk his credit by

imitating the conduct of those very men, whom he had before so successfully opposed.

Quintilian tells us (10. 1.115) that 'Caelius had much natural talent and much wit, more especially when speaking for the prosecution, and deserved a wiser mind and a longer life'. It is interesting to note that Cicero built up his reputation as a lawyer for the defense, while Caelius made his mark as a prosecutor, and that, while Caelius triumphed over his former sponsor when he attacked the older man's client, it was the veteran who extricated him from real danger. Quintilian tells us (6.3.69) that Cicero

'employed allegory in the witticism that he was fond of making about Marcus Caelius, who was better at bringing charges than at defending his client against them, to the effect that he had a good right hand, but a weak left'.

The right hand, we must remember, carried the sword, the left held the shield.

Many ancient authors alluded to Caelius as one of the outstanding orators of his time. Pliny the Younger mentions him (*Epistulae* 1.20.4-5), along with Caesar, Pollio, and Cicero, as a speaker who did not have a concise style:

'... You may observe, in statues, bas-reliefs, pictures, and the bodies of men and animals, and even in trees, that nothing is more graceful than magnitude, if accompanied with proportion'.

Caelius possessed humor<sup>18</sup>, and there was a certain *asperitas* about his language<sup>19</sup>, which occasionally lapsed into the archaic<sup>20</sup>. He was inclined to be *amator*, that is, rather severe, rather caustic<sup>21</sup>. All agree that he possessed elegance and power. We have, however, very little of his oratory for first-hand study. Quintilian gives us what he evidently considers a good specimen. I shall quote the entire passage<sup>22</sup>:

... A powerful effect may be created if to the actual facts of the case we add a plausible picture of what occurred, such as will make our audience feel as if they were actual eyewitnesses of the scene. Such is the description introduced by Marcus Caelius in his speech against Antonius. "For they found him lying prone in a drunken slumber, snoring with all the force of his lungs, and belching continually, while the most distinguished of his female companions sprawled over every couch, and the rest of the seraglio lay around in all directions. They however perceived the approach of the enemy and, half-dead with terror, attempted to arouse Antonius, called him by name, heaved up his head, but all in vain, while one whispered endearing words into his ear, and another slapped him with some violence. At last he recognized the voice and touch of each and tried to embrace her who happened to be nearest. Once awakened he could not sleep, but was too drunk to keep awake, and so was bandied to and fro between sleeping and waking in the hands of his centurions and his paramours". Could you find anything more plausible in imagination, more vehement in censure or more vivid in description?

Every teacher of English composition tells his class that an individual should write about what he knows

<sup>16a</sup>Quintilian 6.3.25.

<sup>16b</sup>Quintilian 10.2.25.

<sup>17</sup>Tacitus, *Dialogus* 21, 'I do not think that anybody loves antiquity to such an extent that he can give praise to Caelius when he becomes archaic'.

<sup>18</sup>Tacitus, *Dialogus* 25.

<sup>19</sup>4.2. 123-124. I use H. E. Butler's translation, in *The Loeb Classical Library*.

<sup>16a</sup>On page 192 of the work cited in note 3 b.

<sup>16b</sup>*Ibidem*, 195.

<sup>17</sup>273 (I use Watson's translation, in the Bohn Library).

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One ought not to try to reduce the world to an equation or an individual to a set of terms, but it seems to me that the words individualism and opportunism explain Caelius's career. Like his friend Curio, Caelius had a penchant for criticizing everybody severely and trusting nobody completely. Consequently he was never a hero-worshipper or an idealist, but an opportunist and an individualist. He followed causes, to be sure—the causes that held out to him at the moment the most advantages. But Caelius loved disagreement and enjoyed being angry. Opposition made him energetic. Seneca (*De Ira* 3.8.6) tells a rather good story about him:

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In conclusion, let me again call attention to the fact that Caelius resembled many of the brilliant and prominent young men of his time.

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### THE HOMERIC ADJECTIVE *χαμαλός*

The interpretation of the adjective *χαμαλός* as it was used by Homer seems to have puzzled the ancients as much as it has the moderns. The meaning 'low' or 'low-lying' which the word acquired in classical Greek<sup>1</sup> did not well apply to the rugged and hilly Thíaki, the reputed Ithaca of Odysseus, or to the island of Circe, which seems from Homer's account to have been elevated. Strabo<sup>2</sup>, writing in the time of Augustus, attempted to bring light out of darkness by suggesting the interpretation 'near the shore'. In the present generation of scholars much interest has been shown in the identification of the Homeric Ithaca. Dörpfeld<sup>3</sup>

was the first, I think, who accepted Strabo's suggestion concerning *χαμαλός*. His example has been followed by a fair percentage of authorities.

But the word of Strabo must not be accepted without due consideration. We are immediately confronted by a difficulty. Presumably he equated the obsolete noun whose locative survives in the form *χαμαί*, from which *χαμαλός* is derived, with *χέρσος*, *θίς*, or *ἀκτὴ*, that is, he regarded that noun as signifying 'the dry land' as opposed to 'the main'. But, in Homer, *χαμαί* and all words related thereto refer solely to the bosom of mother earth, never to the shore or beach in contradistinction to the deep.

The possibilities of this perplexing adjective have been very thoroughly exploited in a recent paper<sup>4</sup> wherein Mr. Homer F. Rebert examines the four applications of the word that are found in the Homeric Poems. He appears not to appreciate the difficulty which has just been mentioned, but he is keenly sensitive to the havoc which the meaning 'near the shore' will work when it is applied—as it ought to be, for consistency's sake—both to the bed of Laertes and to the rock of Charybdis. Likewise, he very wisely protests against providing the adjective with two or three widely separate meanings, particularly since the word is found but five times in all in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*. He casts in his lot with Strabo, but interprets the adjective as a nautical term equivalent to "low-lying in the plane of ocean from the point of view of a man on shore". Otherwise expressed, his belief is that the adjective signifies 'low-appearing'. It is thus transferred by Mr. Rebert from the objective to the subjective sphere. To a man on the land, he argues, an island near the shore seems to 'lie low' in relation to the horizon.

The theory is shrewdly conceived and it works well at the outset. Nor will anyone be greatly distressed at the slightly different—non-nautical—meaning which has to be assigned to the '*χαμαλαί* couches' of Laertes. But the two other situations in which the word occurs are not equally convincing when they are viewed with the seafaring eye. The *χαμαλώτατον* *ρεῖχος* of the Greeks is explained by Mr. Rebert as being situate near the shore; it is, he argues, low-appearing, as compared with objects further inland, to a sailor approaching the shore of the Hellespont. The psychological point of view is thus reversed. I cannot but feel that this is both unlikely in interpretation and strained in perspective. Further, the theory seems to come to grief when it is confronted by the problem of the cliffs of Scylla and Charybdis, for the situation is still visualized from the mariner's point of view. Mr. Rebert's reasoning, when he comes to this point, loses much of its usual lucidity. But, since he wishes to apply the same measuring-rod here as elsewhere, all that need be observed is that the seaman who passes between the crags, which are no more than a bowshot apart, surely gets the same view of both.

But whether Mr. Rebert's conclusions be sound or not, his method unquestionably tends in the right

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<sup>25</sup>Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* 27.2.

<sup>26</sup>Cicero, *Ad Familiares* 2.14.

<sup>27</sup>Compare Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.89; Theocritus 17.79; Isocrates, *Epistulae* 10.3. <sup>28</sup>Strabo 10.2.12.

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direction—i. e. in the effort to harmonize in meaning the various uses of *χαμαλός* that we find in the Homeric Poems. Still it is doubtful whether, on the whole, we are justified in assuming any more than that the mariners of Strabo's time quite possibly did use the adjective in relation to islands as lying near the shore, in the sense that Mr. Rebert suggests. It has frequently been argued that we have a survival of this usage in the language of the modern Levantine sailors. But they, it seems, use the adjective in relation to the position of a *ship*, not an *island*, near the shore. Is it possible that a similar usage obtained in the time of Strabo, and that he carried his assumption too far? Nautical terms are notoriously long-lived. At all events, Strabo's observation gives us little assistance in the understanding of the term as it occurs in Homer. Strabo was born many centuries too late to be of much service to us in a quest of this kind, particularly since he was a geographer and not a professional interpreter of the poet.

In the belief that the majority of scholars have paid too close heed to the later turns of meaning borne by the word, and have neglected the possibilities of interpretation which its primary significance supplies, I venture to review the situation, in the hope that it may be possible to reach a more satisfactory conclusion.

Our knowledge relative to *χαμαλός* and its Homeric uses may be summarized thus: it is formed from what is apparently an old locative *χαμαί*, meaning 'on the earth'. The adjective occurs three times in the positive degree, once in the comparative, once in the superlative, as follows:

(1) of a couch or couches<sup>5</sup>: *φύλλων κεκλιμένων χαμαλαί βεβλήσται εὐναί*.

(2) of the island of Ithaca<sup>6</sup>: *αὐτὴ δὲ χαμαλὴ πανπερτάτῃ εἰν ἄλλῃ κείται*.

(3) of the island of Aeaea<sup>7</sup>: *αὐτὴ δὲ χαμαλὴ κείται*.

(4) of the cliff of Charybdis<sup>8</sup>: *τὸν δ' ἔτερον σκόπελον χαμαλωτέρον ὄψει*.

(5) of part of the wall of the Greek camp<sup>9</sup>: *τείχος ἐδέδμητο χαμαλωτάτον*.

Very fortunately, we are certain of the meaning of the word in the first passage. A definite comparison is made of the regimen of the aged Laertes in summer and his regimen in winter. In the latter season his bed is *ἐν κόνι*, 'in the dust and ashes beside the hearth'; in summer his couches are strewn *χαμαλαί*, which can mean nothing but 'on the earth'. The adjective is this equivalent to the adverb *χαμαί*.

It is more difficult to conceive the meaning of the epithet as applied to an island, a cliff, or a wall. The traditional interpretation, 'low-lying', which is based entirely on the classical use of the adjective, is quite absurd as applied to Ithaca and Aeaea, both of which are elsewhere designated as rugged and elevated<sup>10</sup>. Nor is it worth while to discuss the makeshift rendering 'lying low at its shore', which is employed by Hiller and certain other translators. On the other hand, Mr. Rebert's interpretation, "near the shore", is by no

means impossible. Of the location of the fabled Aeaea it is best to say frankly that we know nothing. Ithaca is certainly one or the other of the Ionian Islands, all of which are fairly close to the shore. But, if we adopt this as the meaning of *χαμαλὴ* in Odyssey 9.25, the term would seem to be singularly inexpressive (apart from the degree of the adjective), inasmuch as 'many islands' are spoken of in the same breath<sup>11</sup>.

The context does not make it at all clear what is the element of comparison between the rocks occupied by Scylla and by Charybdis. It is commonly believed to be height; but, if we rid our minds of this classical meaning of our adjective, there is nothing in the passage itself to suggest height. Since the second peril foretold is usually worse than the first—which is true of Charybdis—, we should expect to find in *χαμαλωτέρον* some such general idea as 'more formidable'. It would be an anticlimax to make the second crag 'lower'.

The wall presents on the whole the greatest puzzle. The context makes it abundantly clear that it is not low at this point; it seems, if anything, to be the contrary.

We are led back, then, to old Laertes and his beds of leaves. These, as we have seen, are undoubtedly laid 'on the ground'. It is equally certain that this is the primary meaning of *χαμαλός*, which is itself of adverbial significance. It is also important to observe that the other closely related words which occur in Homer, *χαμάδις*, *χαμάζε*, *χαμαιενός*, *χαμαιένης*, *χθών*, together with the *χαμαιγενής*<sup>12</sup> of the Homeric Hymns, all express a direct relation with the soil or the earth, but have in themselves no suggestion of 'lowness'. The numerous other *χαμαι-* compounds which we find in the lexicon are of later origin and significance. Is it possible to extend this *chthonic* use of Homer to embrace an island, a cliff, and a wall?

There seems to be no difficulty, after all, in attaching it to an island if we remember that in the Odyssey we have to do with true poetry. Ithaca and Aeaea are both said to lie *χαμαλὴ* in the sea. This means, I think, nothing more more than 'resting on the bosom of earth' or 'reposing on the land beneath', just as Laertes's couches do. Of Aeaea, Homer says that the boundless sea rings it about, while Aeaea itself lies *χαμαλὴ* in the midst<sup>13</sup>. One feels that a contrast is here pointed between the restlessness of the vast sea and the stationary nature of the island. Ithaca is designated as lying *χαμαλὴ πανπερτάτῃ*<sup>14</sup>, which may well be another way of saying that it constitutes a conspicuous landmark. On a final analysis, it may be that to the mind of Homer the adjective meant something like 'fixed' or 'propped fast'.

Why is the epithet applied to these islands alone? There is no ready answer. However, it may be observed that only one other island is spoken of as 'lying in the sea', namely Ogygia, which is 'far distant'<sup>15</sup>. It may not be without significance that something like midway between the Ithacan passage and the

<sup>5</sup>Odyssey 11.194.

<sup>6</sup>Odyssey 9.25.

<sup>7</sup>Odyssey 10.196.

<sup>8</sup>Odyssey 12.101.

<sup>9</sup>Iliad 13.683-684.

<sup>10</sup>For Ithaca compare Odyssey 1.247, 15.501, 16.124, 21.346; for Aeaea see Odyssey 10.148, 194, 211.

<sup>11</sup>Odyssey 9.23.

<sup>12</sup>Hymn to Aphrodite 108; Hymn to Demeter 352.

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(3) of the island of Aeaea<sup>7</sup>: *αὐτὴ δὲ χθαμαλὴ κείται*.

(4) of the cliff of Charybdis<sup>8</sup>: *τὸν δ' ἕτερον σκόπελον χθαμαλώτερον δέει*.

(5) of part of the wall of the Greek camp<sup>9</sup>: *τείχος ἐδέμῃτο χθαμαλώτατον*.

Very fortunately, we are certain of the meaning of the word in the first passage. A definite comparison is made of the regimen of the aged Laertes in summer and his regimen in winter. In the latter season his bed is *ἐν κόνι*, 'in the dust and ashes beside the hearth'; in summer his couches are strewn *χθαμαλαί*, which can mean nothing but 'on the earth'. The adjective is this equivalent to the adverb *χamai*.

It is more difficult to conceive the meaning of the epithet as applied to an island, a cliff, or a wall. The traditional interpretation, 'low-lying', which is based entirely on the classical use of the adjective, is quite absurd as applied to Ithaca and Aeaea, both of which are elsewhere designated as rugged and elevated<sup>10</sup>. Nor is it worth while to discuss the makeshift rendering 'lying low at its shore', which is employed by Hiller and certain other translators. On the other hand, Mr. Rebert's interpretation, "near the shore", is by no

means impossible. Of the location of the fabled Aeaea it is best to say frankly that we know nothing. Ithaca is certainly one or the other of the Ionian Islands, all of which are fairly close to the shore. But, if we adopt this as the meaning of *χθαμαλὴ* in *Odyssey* 9.25, the term would seem to be singularly inexpressive (apart from the degree of the adjective), inasmuch as 'many islands' are spoken of in the same breath<sup>11</sup>.

The context does not make it at all clear what is the element of comparison between the rocks occupied by Scylla and by Charybdis. It is commonly believed to be height; but, if we rid our minds of this classical meaning of our adjective, there is nothing in the passage itself to suggest height. Since the second peril foretold is usually worse than the first—which is true of Charybdis—, we should expect to find in *χθαμαλώτερον* some such general idea as 'more formidable'. It would be an anticlimax to make the second crag 'lower'.

The wall presents on the whole the greatest puzzle. The context makes it abundantly clear that it is not low at this point; it seems, if anything, to be the contrary.

We are led back, then, to old Laertes and his beds of leaves. These, as we have seen, are undoubtedly laid 'on the ground'. It is equally certain that this is the primary meaning of *χθαμαλός*, which is itself of adverbial significance. It is also important to observe that the other closely related words which occur in Homer, *χαμάδις*, *χαμάζε*, *χαμαιενάς*, *χαμαιεύνης*, *χθών*, together with the *χμαιγενής*<sup>12</sup> of the Homeric Hymns, all express a direct relation with the soil or the earth, but have in themselves no suggestion of 'lowness'. The numerous other *χamai*- compounds which we find in the lexicon are of later origin and significance. Is it possible to extend this *chthonic* use of Homer to embrace an island, a cliff, and a wall?

There seems to be no difficulty, after all, in attaching it to an island if we remember that in the *Odyssey* we have to do with true poetry. Ithaca and Aeaea are both said to lie *χθαμαλὴ* in the sea. This means, I think, nothing more than 'resting on the bosom of earth' or 'reposing on the land beneath', just as Laertes's couches do. Of Aeaea, Homer says that the boundless sea rings it about, while Aeaea itself lies *χθαμαλὴ* in the midst<sup>13</sup>. One feels that a contrast is here pointed between the restlessness of the vast sea and the stationary nature of the island. Ithaca is designated as lying *χθαμαλὴ πανπερτάτη*<sup>14</sup>, which may well be another way of saying that it constitutes a conspicuous landmark. On a final analysis, it may be that to the mind of Homer the adjective meant something like 'fixed' or 'propped fast'.

Why is the epithet applied to these islands alone? There is no ready answer. However, it may be observed that only one other island is spoken of as 'lying in the sea', namely Ogygia, which is 'far distant'<sup>15</sup>. It may not be without significance that something like midway between the Ithacan passage and the

<sup>5</sup>*Odyssey* 11.194.

<sup>6</sup>*Odyssey* 9.25.

<sup>7</sup>*Odyssey* 10.196.

<sup>8</sup>*Odyssey* 12.101.

<sup>9</sup>*Iliad* 13.683-684.

<sup>10</sup>For Ithaca compare *Odyssey* 1.247, 15.501, 16.124, 21.346; for Aeaea see *Odyssey* 10.148, 194, 211.

<sup>11</sup>*Odyssey* 9.23.

<sup>12</sup>Hymn to Aphrodite 108; Hymn to Demeter 352.

<sup>13</sup>*Odyssey* 10.196.

<sup>14</sup>*Odyssey* 9.25.

<sup>15</sup>*Odyssey* 7.244.

Aeaeon passage we have the curious reference to the *πλωτή*<sup>16</sup>, 'floating', island of Aeolus. The proximity of the three notices may be fortuitous, but it is worth observing.

These are the uses of the adjective in the positive. Now, if we keep in mind its adverbial nature, it is quite apparent that, if several objects are *χαμαί*, one of them cannot be so in a greater degree than another. *Χθαμαλός* is an adjective of the type of *ὀρεσίτροφος* or *φειλόπους*. It cannot be compared in direct terms of its root-meaning: A 'mountain-bred' lion may have the secondary or metaphorical characteristic of 'bold' or 'ravenous', and a 'cork-footed' man may, similarly, be 'fleet'. The comparatives and superlatives of such words can contain only their secondary meaning. What, then, was the secondary meaning of *χθαμαλός* in the eyes of Homer, that is, what is the element of 'on-the-groundiveness' that it mirrors? Among the later Greeks the idea of 'low-lyingness' was developed; that was not true in this early age. A thing on the earth is 'well-supported', 'stoutly propped up', 'substantial', 'staunch', or 'massive'. These, I think, are the basic meanings on which the comparative and the superlative are constructed.

This works very well as applied to the cliffs. The rocks are but a bowshot apart. That of Scylla is tall, smooth, and precipitous. The other is *χθαμαλώτερον*, having at its base the great cavern into which the sea is sucked<sup>17</sup>. That the fig-tree stands on a shelf would seem to follow from the passage at the end of Book 12<sup>18</sup>, where Odysseus clings to the trunk. This would suggest a vast breadth of rock to accommodate the chasm, as well as one of a more rugged formation than the other. They may be equally tall, as the spray from the whirlpool falls on top of both<sup>19</sup>. Here, then, *χθαμαλώτερον* means 'not so slender, upright, and smooth' as the other, in other words, more massive, more firmly fixed, and more heavily buttressed.

This meaning fits the wall. The context<sup>20</sup>, as Mr. Rebert has well shown, makes it quite manifest, from the mention of lofty towers, gates, and wall itself, that the wall is high. The Trojans have done well in the earlier part of Book 12; but here (13.682-684) there looms above them a portion of the wall that is *χθαμαλώτατον* which Hector succeeds in storming with the greatest difficulty, that is, this section is extremely strong, massive, or well-buttressed. That buttresses were used by the Greeks to strengthen this wall we see from verses 259-260 of this book.

The animating principle of this inquiry is found in the time-honored maxim that an author is his own best commentator.

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#### VERGIL'S USE OF CERTAIN ADJECTIVES

Words not only express ideas, but they conserve history. Witness the word *lawdry*. Are not four great

epochs of world-history recorded in *halloo*, *hurrah*, *caper*, and *camouflage*? It is not the *form* of a word, but the *use* of a word which determines its classification.

Names are applied to objects, in order that both we and others may recognize them, and that, when the sound is uttered again, the specific object may be recalled to the mind.

The Roman system of names, in the classical period, is well-known to all readers of THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY. 'Nicknames', often at first derisive, but later retained as complimentary designations, were early known. In fact, in such nicknames we are to find the origin of many famous *cognomina*, e. g. Paetus, Pullus, Varus, Scaurus.

The epithets applied by authors to their heroes arise from a similar impulse. These epithets, generally descriptive adjectives, serve at times, either themselves, or in combination with a name, as, in effect, names.

In Vergil's Aeneid the name *Achates* occurs twenty-one times<sup>21</sup>. In ten passages no epithet is applied. Twice *fortis* is used, once *rapidus*, once *celerans*; *Fidus* occurs seven times. The combination *Fidus Achates* serves, virtually, as a name.

The name *Anchises* is found forty-seven times. In eighteen passages there is no epithet. *Pater* is used as an epithet seventeen times. For metrical convenience, evidently, *parens* is used in like manner twelve times. The different case-forms of *genitor* are used of Anchises sixteen times, but almost always without the proper name itself. Is it not worthy of note that the ablative and the vocative forms of *Anchises* are always used without an adjective?

In one reading of the Aeneid I found the word *Aeneas* in its various case-forms 225 times; words or expressions referring to Aeneas were found forty-four times more. In the latter group were such expressions as *nate dea*, *satus Anchisa*, *Troius heros*, generally found in the same metrical unit of the verse. The name *Aeneas* without epithet is found 156 times, *Pius Aeneas* seventeen times. The name *Aeneas* without an epithet occurs more often in the latter six books than in the first six. Proper adjectives, such as *Troianus*, *Troius*, *Tros*, and *Dardanius* are used 21 times.

The life-history of Dido could be deduced from the descriptive adjectives applied to her and, in particular, from the order in which some of them occur in the poem: *Tyria*, *Sidonia*, *Phoenissa*, *laetissima*, *pulcherriima*, *optima*, *inops*, *moritura*, *demens*, *effera*, *infelix*.

The name Turnus is used at least 121 times in Books 7-12. Most significant among the descriptions of him are *violentia pectora Turni*, 10.151, *violentia Turni*, 11.376, *violentia Turni*, 12.45. The noun *violentia* is applied to him in 12.9 also.

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<sup>16</sup>Odyssey 10.3. It is unnecessary to refute the old theory which maintained that the Homeric Greeks regarded all islands as floating. It was based on the supposed derivation of *νήσος* from *νῶω* or *νέω*. *Nēsos* is now known to be a pre-Greek word.

<sup>17</sup>Odyssey 12.73-110.

<sup>18</sup>Odyssey 12.238-239.

<sup>19</sup>Odyssey 12.431-441.

<sup>20</sup>Odyssey 12.384.

<sup>21</sup>In this connection the reader will, of course, recall Horace, *Sermones* 1.3.43-48. See also a paper entitled *What's in a Name?*, by G. B. Colburn, in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 6.66-69. C. K. >.

<sup>22</sup>The reader will find it a useful and interesting exercise to supply for himself the references here and elsewhere in this paper. Very helpful in this connection will be M. N. Wetmore's book, *Index Verborum Vergilianus* (Yale University Press, 1911), for which see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 6.101-103, 109-111. C. K. >.